



STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 83720
BOISE, IDAHO 83720-0027

TOM LUNA
STATE SUPERINTENDENT
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

August 21, 2008

TO: Superintendents, Principals, Business Managers, Charter School Administrators, Title I Directors, Special Education Directors, Testing Coordinators, Technology Coordinators and Public Information Officers

FROM: Tom Luna, Superintendent of Public Instruction

RE: Weekly E-Newsletter

IN THIS REPORT:

- **Idaho receives \$3.4 million Charter School Grant**
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IDAHO RECEIVES \$3.4 MILLION CHARTER SCHOOL GRANT (GO TO TOP)

The U.S. Department of Education's Assistant Deputy Secretary for Innovation and Improvement Doug Mesecar visited Idaho Arts Charter School in Nampa this week to present a \$3,386,402 Charter School Program grant award to Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna. Idaho could receive up to \$2.7 million more in funding for this grant, depending on Congressional appropriations.

"The Charter School Program grant will help promote the growth of high-quality charter schools throughout the state of Idaho, including a new generation of charter schools that target underserved populations," said Superintendent Luna. "I thank the U.S. Department of Education for its continued support of school choice in Idaho, and I am excited about the opportunities that this funding brings to our great state."

Idaho was one of only five states that received the competitive grant through the Department's Charter Schools Program (CSP) this year, which supports states' efforts to plan, design, implement and disseminate information about charter schools. The other states receiving grants are New York, Florida, Oregon and Utah.

The long-term objectives for Idaho's public charter schools are to promote the growth and development of quality Idaho charter schools focused on high achievement for all students and to develop a statewide charter school public awareness campaign to increase understanding of the charter school model.

"Supporting the growth of new, high quality charter schools is critical to our efforts to improve the educational opportunities for all children," Mesecar said. "Idaho has continued to demonstrate strong annual growth in the number of charter schools that school districts and the Idaho Public Charter School Commission are authorizing."



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These grants help states create more quality charter schools and increase school choices for parents and their children. State educational agencies with a specific statute authorizing charter schools may apply for funding. In awarding grants, the U.S. Department of Education gives preference to states that have demonstrated progress in increasing the number of high-quality schools, hold schools accountable for reaching clear and measurable objectives, and give public charter schools a high degree of autonomy over budgets and expenditures.

Charter schools are independent public schools designed and operated by parents, educators, community leaders, education entrepreneurs and others with a contract, or charter, from a public agency, such as a local or state education agency or an institution of higher education. Charter schools are operated free-of-charge to parents and are open to all students. These schools provide parents enhanced educational choices within the public school system. More information about the Public Charter Schools Program is available at <http://www.ed.gov/programs/charter/index.html>.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SURVEY NOW AVAILABLE (GO TO TOP)

At the request of the Idaho Legislature, the State Department of Education, working in conjunction with the Professional Standards Commission (PSC), is studying the training of school administrators regarding teacher supervision and evaluation. As part of this study, the Department and PSC developed the Administrator Preparation and Professional Development Survey to address questions that were raised in the last legislative session about Idaho's current administrator preparation programs and administrator professional development opportunities in the state.

To ensure accurate data, the Department is asking every building administrator and principal to complete the survey. To fill out the survey, please visit www.sde.idaho.gov and click on the "Professional Development Survey" link under Latest News. It should not take more than 10 minutes. Please submit your survey no later than **August 28, 2008 at 5 p.m.**

If you have any questions regarding this survey, please do not hesitate to contact Christina Linder, Director of Certification, at (208) 332-6886 or CPLinder@sde.idaho.gov.

REGISTER NOW FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT WORKSHOPS (GO TO TOP)

Two workshop opportunities and a webinar are available for Title I schools and districts that have been identified for school improvement Alert, Year 1, Year 2, Corrective Action, or Restructuring based on the Spring 2008 ISAT scores. You are eligible for this technical assistance even if you made AYP in Spring 2008 and are now in a Year I or beyond holding pattern (*).

- **SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT WORKSHOP GENERAL SESSION:**
School Improvement workshops are coming soon to a location "near" you! Presentations will be offered on the following topics:
 - Overview of the 9 Characteristics of High Performing Schools
 - Roles & Alignment in Change Management
 - Change Conversations
 - Decision Making Processes



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- Overcoming Resistance
- School Improvement Planning 2008
- **SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN WRITING SUPPORT SESSIONS:**
In addition to the general workshop session, if you are new to school improvement (Year 1) or had a plan that was scored as Needs Revision during the 2007 improvement plan review process, you are eligible to sign up for an optional one hour session designed to provide one-on-one technical assistance with your specific school improvement plan. We ask that you come with your plan well underway; this is not a good time to begin this year's work on your school improvement plan. Rather, it is a time to get feedback and support during your planning process.
- **CIP TOOL SUPPORT WEBINARS:**
Webinar sessions are being offered for those who are new to the school improvement process, or who are still struggling to navigate the CIP Tool.

You can register for one, two or all three of these opportunities. Register online at <http://csi.boisestate.edu/sessionregistration.htm>. There is a maximum of three (3) participants per identified school or district office, per technical assistance offering. Please contact Katherine Weatherspoon at the (208) 426-4852 with event registration questions, and contact Lisa Kinnaman at (208) 426-2154 with questions regarding Title I School Improvement support.

Here is the schedule of workshops, which will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day:

- Lewiston: Red Lion Hotel Lewiston on September 9, 2008
- Nampa: Holiday Inn Express & Suites on September 11, 2008
- Boise: AmeriTel Inn Boise Spectrum on September 12, 2008
- Idaho Falls: Red Lion Hotel on the Falls on September 19, 2008
- Twin Falls: AmeriTel Inn Twin Falls on September 26, 2008

CIP Tool Support Webinars will be held from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. or 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. on October 1, 2 and 3, 2008.

SUPERINTENDENT'S SCHEDULE (GO TO TOP)

- Superintendent Luna will attend the Capital for a Day event in Arco with Governor Otter on Monday, August 25, 2008.
- Superintendent Luna will attend the Concurrent Credit Task Force meeting from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, August 26, 2008.
- Superintendent Luna will attend the graduation ceremony at the Idaho Correctional Institute at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, August 27, 2008.

WHAT'S NEW (GO TO TOP)

Office Location
650 West State Street

Telephone
208-332-6800

Speech/Hearing Impaired
1-800-377-3529

Fax
208-334-2228



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- **DMA Trainings** – The State Department of Education has scheduled Direct Math Assessment (DMA) trainings this fall for school district and school building testing coordinators and teachers. There is no additional charge for your district to attend the trainings. Here is the schedule of trainings:
 - Region I: Post Falls-Thursdays, Sept. 18th 9:00am-12:00pm
 - Region II: Lewiston-Friday, Sept. 19th 9:00am-12:00pm
 - Region III: Boise- Tuesday, Sept. 23rd 9:00am-12:00pm or 1:00pm-4:00pm
 - Boise-Wednesday, Sept. 24th 9:00am-12:00pm or 1:00pm-4:00pm
 - Region IV: Twin Falls-Friday, Sept. 26th 1:00pm-4:00pm
 - Region V: Pocatello-Tuesday, Sept. 30th 1:00pm-4:00pm
 - Region VI: Idaho Falls-Wednesday, Oct. 1st 9:00am-12:00pm

For more information or to register, please visit <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/math/> and download the registration form. Please e-mail or fax your application to Sarah Bluemont at sbluemont@sde.idaho.gov or (208) 334-2228.

- **FICA Match Report** – It's time to complete and submit your FICA Match Report for the 2007-2008 school year. This covers July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008. The report is due **September 30, 2008**. The cover letter and the report form are available online at www.sde.idaho.gov/site/cnp/statistics_finance.htm. Completed reports should be faxed to Ken Lang at (208) 334-2228. If you wish to e-mail the report, send it to KPLang@sde.idaho.gov, but please remember to include the required signature. If you have any questions, please contact Ken Lang at (208) 332-6858 or KPLang@sde.idaho.gov.

REMINDERS (GO TO TOP)

- **Register for the IBEDS/HQT workshops** – Register now for the IBEDS/HQT Training Workshops. School administrators are encouraged to attend. The morning session will cover the important basics of IBEDS and certificated staff credentialing related to funding as well as state and federal reporting. The afternoon session will be targeted towards use of the IBEDS Program. Visit http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/forms/ibeds_form/default.asp to register for the workshops. If you have questions, please contact LaRae Ashby at (208) 332-6845 or LBashby@sde.idaho.gov.
- **Federal Program Directors' Meeting** – The annual Federal Program Directors' Meeting is scheduled for September 15, 2008 at the DoubleTree Hotel Riverside in Boise. You can register online at www.sde.idaho.gov, click on the link under "Latest News." A block of rooms has been reserved for September 14 and 15 for participants. Please contact the hotel to make the reservations at (208) 343-1871. Reserve your room by **September 1, 2008**. More information can be found on our Web site. If you have questions, please contact the NCLB Team administrative assistants: Claudia Striegel at (208) 332-6906, cstriegel@sde.idaho.gov or Tyrel Trainor at (208) 332-6942, tstrainor@sde.idaho.gov.
- **FREE School Review Process Guide** – The Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement is a federally funded organization charged with providing support and technical assistance to schools and districts in needs improvement status. They have recently developed a School Review Process Guide designed to walk schools and districts through a meaningful and useful school improvement planning process. The guide includes processes and implementation tools in these four areas: 1. Developing School Leadership Teams, 2. Useful Data Collection,



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3. Analysis & Interpretation, 4. School Improvement Planning & Implementation. This guide and included tools are FREE of charge. Informational teleconferences are being offered on **August 27, 2008** at 11 a.m. (1 p.m. Eastern) and **September 10, 2008** at 2 p.m. (4 p.m. Eastern). If you are interested in learning more about the guide or signing up for one of the teleconference sessions, please contact Carolyn A. Brown, PhD, Senior Research Associate at carolyn.brown@learningpt.org.

- **2008 Idaho Student Mock Election** – Secretary of State Ben Ysursa invites your high school to participate in the 2008 Idaho Student Mock Election. This online voting exercise has been developed in cooperation with the State Department of Education to instill an appreciation and importance of voting in Idaho's young people. The goal of the program is to provide an active voting experience for high school students across the state. Any high school government class is welcome to participate by using school computers during the mock election. The 2008 Idaho Student Mock Election will be available for two days only: Thursday, October 23 and Friday, October 24. For more details, please visit <http://www.sos.idaho.gov/isme/ISMEIndex.jsp>. To participate, please e-mail a list of interested teachers and their school email addresses to isme@sos.idaho.gov or contact the SOS directly at (208) 334-2852.
- **Wind for Schools project** – Idaho has been selected as one of six states participating in *Wind for Schools*, a unique educational project in collaboration with Boise State University, the U.S. Department of Energy and Idaho's wind energy industry. This project is designed to educate our students about wind energy and prepare them for future jobs in this industry. Wind is the fastest-growing energy source both worldwide and in the US. The goal is to install wind turbines at four rural schools per year for the next three years. If your school is interested in participating in this project, please visit <http://coen.boisestate.edu/WindEnergy/WfS/index.asp>, complete the application and submit it to Todd Haynes at Boise State University at toddhaynes@boisestate.edu.

UPCOMING DEADLINES (GO TO TOP)

- **Aug. 15, 2008** – The Title I-A Annual Performance Report is due. Please submit this online at http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/title_one/. Please scroll to the bottom of the page. The contact for the performance report at the State Department of Education is Tyrel Trainor at (208) 332-6942, NCLB Administrative Assistant, tstrainor@sde.idaho.gov.
- **Aug. 15, 2008** – The Title I Summer Extended Time Report is due. Visit http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/title_one/ and scroll to the bottom of the page. Contact Tyrel Trainor at (208) 332-6942, NCLB Administrative Assistant, tstrainor@sde.idaho.gov with any needs or questions regarding the report.
- **Aug. 28, 2008** – The deadline to apply for the Fresh Fruits and Vegetables program (FFVP). FFVP has been expanded to all 50 states and Guam. At this time, the State Department of Education is accepting applications from National School Lunch Program sponsors for sites that want to be considered for this program. To apply, please visit www.sde.idaho.gov/site/cnp. If you have further questions about the program, please contact Lynda Westphal in Child Nutrition Programs at the State Department of Education at (208) 332-6825 or LJWestphal@sde.idaho.gov. Here are some of the requirements:
 - Only **elementary** schools in the state with more than 50% free and reduced students can participate in this program;
 - More than 25 schools in Idaho can be selected;



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- The school site must make **free FRESH fruits and vegetables** available to students in one or more areas designated by the school in addition to the National School Lunch Program (dried fruit is not allowed anymore).
- **Aug. 29, 2008** – The deadline to submit materials to take part in the Certification Renewal Pilot Project. The State Department of Education is piloting a simplified process for recertification this fall. After hearing feedback about how cumbersome this process has become, the Department is piloting a procedure that will only require individuals to submit a Renewal Application and a check for the recertification fee at the time of renewal. For accountability purposes, the Department will randomly select a minimum of 10 percent of Renewal Applications to audit. If audited, the individual will have up to 60 days to submit proof of professional development to the State Department of Education. All teachers and administrators are eligible to take part in the pilot project this fall if they are required to recertify in the Fall 2008. To participate, please visit <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/TeacherCertification/default.asp>.
- **Aug. 29, 2008** – The deadline to submit applications for Safe Routes to School funding to the Idaho Transportation Department. For more information, visit www.itd.idaho.gov and click on “Safe Routes to School.”
- **Sept. 1, 2008** – The deadline for school districts to adopt a policy allowing students to use epinephrine auto-injectors for severe allergic reactions. State Department of Education staff discussed this new requirement passed by the Idaho Legislature in 2008 on the Post-Legislative Tour. This is in the same section of law as the existing requirement that boards allow the use of inhalers for students with asthma or other life-threatening respiratory illnesses. Students are to be allowed to carry and self-administer these drugs on school grounds, though the district may require that a duplicate copy of the prescription be kept on file with the school nurse, or, in the absence of a school nurse, with the school’s administrator. For more information on Senate Bill 1443, please visit <http://www3.state.id.us/oasis/S1443.html>.
- **Sept. 25, 2008** -- The deadline to submit Alternative Authorization – Teacher to New Certificate requests. If you have questions, please contact Cina Oravez at (208) 332-6936 or CLOravez@sde.idaho.gov. Please submit complete application packets to Cina Oravez, Alternative Authorization Coordinator, prior to this date. You can mail applications to:
State Department of Education
ATTN: Cina Oravez
PO Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0027
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- **Sept. 30, 2008** – The deadline to submit nominations for Idaho Teacher of the Year to the State Department of Education. Applications for the 2009 Idaho Teacher of the Year are now available on the State Department of Education’s Web site at www.sde.idaho.gov/TeacheroftheYear. Please note that the Idaho Teacher of the Year application is the same as the application for the National Teacher of the Year.
- **Nov. 3, 2008** – The deadline to submit applications for the third annual BubbleWrap® Competition for Young Inventors, sponsored by the Sealed Air Corporation and The National Museum of Education. The contest is open to students in grades 5-8. This innovative contest incorporates national and state academic standards in the fields of engineering design, problem-solving, entrepreneurship and all of the core curricular subjects. Visit www.nmoe.org



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for more details about the competition. Applications may be received via hard copy mail, email or FAX. If you have further questions, please contact the National Museum of Education at info@nmoe.org or (330) 376-8300.

- **Nov. 28, 2008** – The deadline to enter into the Council for America's First Freedom's 16th annual First Freedom Student Competition. The competition is a national essay contest that offers students in grades 9-12 an opportunity to compete for a \$3,000, \$1,500 or \$750 award as they examine the First Amendment and the history and relevance of religious freedom in America and the world today. For more information on this competition, please visit www.firstfreedom.org. Registration is due by Monday, November 24, 2008, and the postmark entry deadline is November 28, 2008.
- **Jan. 30, 2009** – The Idaho Dropout Summit has been scheduled at the Nampa Civic Center in Nampa. More details to come.